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RUEHJI/AMCONSUL JEDDAH PRIORITY 0104
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PESHAWAR 000255

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 5/23/2016
TAGS: [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [PK](#)
SUBJECT: NEW FRONTIER GOVERNOR ON THE WAY

REF: A) PESHAWAR 099; B) ISLAMABAD 5416

CLASSIFIED BY: Gautam Rana, Political Officer, U.S. Consulate ,
Department of State.
REASON: 1.4 (b), (d)

SUMMARY

1. (C) Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP) Governor Khalil ur-Rehman recently confided that Lt. General (retired) Ali Mohammed Jan Orakzai will soon replace him. Embittered by his premature removal, Rehman castigated his replacement, claiming Orakzai was not aggressive enough in 2003-04 tribal operations, is "too close" to the tribal people, and will not obtain provincial government help to isolate growing Islamist militant groups in the tribal zone. The GOP is preparing to staff key Tribal Agency positions with serving or retired Pakistan Army officers to back up the new Governor and to assure a military-led unity of command, according to Rehman. END SUMMARY.

ANY ONE BUT ORAKZAI

2. (C) President Musharraf will shortly name Defense Production Secretary (and former 11th Corps Commander) Lt. General

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(retired) Ali Mohammed Jan Orakzai as the new NWFP governor, according to Rehman. Rehman confirmed his resignation had been approved by President Musharraf in March (REF A), but the search for his successor coupled with lengthy deliberations on a new Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) strategy delayed the leaked news of his resignation (REF B). Serving only fourteen months on the job, Rehman could not hide his keen disappointment over his imminent departure and lost no time in condemning his successor.

3. (C) Rehman claimed Orakzai is "the wrong person at the wrong time" for his job:

--Orakzai led the 11th Corps in 2003-2004, as military operations commenced against al Qa'ida and other Islamist militants in South Waziristan. His experience is "a drawback." Orakzai got "his clock cleaned" in several operations and frequently bumped heads with then NWFP governor Iftikhar Hussein Shah, also a retired Army general. Why bring back another general carrying this baggage of "touchy disagreeableness?" Rehman asked.

--Orakzai is an Orakzai tribal member. As such, he is widely perceived to be too close to those particular tribal interests and therefore biased in his judgments. More importantly, Orakzai opposed large-scale military offensives in South Waziristan during his Corps tenure, and is likely to resist them now, even if battleground conditions require them, according to Rehman.

--Orakzai is "not a political animal" and will not obtain support from NWFP Chief Minister Durrani and his JUI-F party to constitute tribal jirgas (councils) needed to drain local support away from Islamist militant groups in Waziristan. Rehman maintained he had such support, but his backing will walk away at a critical juncture.

NEW FATA STRATEGY~

14. (C) Rehman said the new FATA strategy outlined by former Chief Secretary Sahibzada Imtiaz (REF B) empowers the Governor as the director of FATA policy, overseeing (1) political negotiations, (2) economic development, and (3) military action. Rehman stressed this strategy defines military action as "the last resort," to be carefully targeted, rapidly executed, and eventually paving the way for Frontier Corps and local levies to replace regular Army units as security guarantors.

~DIRECTED BY ARMY OFFICERS

15. (C) While charting a course towards a smaller Army footprint in the FATA, the new strategy relies heavily on retired and serving Army officers to conduct FATA affairs. Rehman claimed this decision was recently approved by President Musharraf and reflects GOP thinking that the Army should be in the lead to prevent policy disagreements emerging between civil and military authorities and to assure a military-led unity of command. Rehman suggested it may be "a long wait" before the Army shrinks

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its profile in the FATA because it is now assuming a much larger presence. At the same time, Rehman claimed Army officers, unlike their British Raj counterparts, do not possess the experience required to promote badly needed political negotiations with tribal elders or to prevent new policy disputes from flaring up. Long-time serving civil bureaucrats represent the best chance to carry out tribal negotiations, Rehman opined.

COMMENT

16. (C) Rumors of Rehman's departure have been rampant for several weeks, chiefly due to his failure to drive forward FATA development, to reinvigorate the PML-Q party in the NWFP, and to shake off corruption allegations. Most observers here are now betting that Orakzai's military background, personal relationship with Musharraf, and tribal experience will allow him to do a better job than his predecessor. They write off Rehman's criticism as sour grapes, even though he poses key questions that will help us assess GOP performance in the FATA over the longer term. End comment.

SPANGLER